

On-Shore Construction Underway Along Little Lake Butte des Morts

By Greg Swanson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Construction crews have been busy since the end of June preparing the on-shore sediment treatment site, or staging area, on the west shore of Little Lake Butte des Morts. The site, located on North Lake Street, adjacent to the interchange of U.S. Highway 41 and U.S. Highway 441, will be a visible and busy reminder to area residents of the cleanup activities in Little Lake Butte des Morts, otherwise known as Operable Unit 1.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LITTLE LAKE PARTNERS WEB SITE

A conceptual drawing of the on-shore sediment treatment area.

The staging area will be home to a water treatment plant and a gravel dewatering, or draining, area lined with plastic where the geotextile (fabric) sediment collection tubes have been placed. It will also house a boat dock and support area for the dredges and other watercraft, an area for loading the dewatered sediment into trucks, and a pipeline that will return treated (clean) water to the lake.

After the sediment is dredged, it will be pumped to the staging area into the large, heavy plastic tubes. The sediment will remain in the tubes as the water drains off. The water will be collected and sent to the treatment plant. The process includes sand and activated carbon treatments to remove contaminants from the water. The clean water will be returned to the lake. The water treatment facility will be housed

in a building that is designed to minimize noise during its operations.

Greg Hill, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources implementation coordinator, explained why it is important to keep the noise down. "There are some houses just downstream and noise travels across open water," he said. "It was a consideration during the work at Deposit N and we are carrying that over here."

The tubes, which are being supplied by a Rhinelander company, will be located on a large sealed area between the water treatment plant and the river. After most of the water has drained from the dredged sediment, the sediment will be removed from the tubes and loaded into lined, covered trucks for transport to the disposal site in Chilton.

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The Fox River Current will continue to feature updates on cleanup and restoration activities that are planned or ongoing.

Technical Update . . .

Construction Starts for Little Lake Butte des Morts Cleanup

By Greg Swanson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Little Lake Butte des Morts

- Construction of the on-shore water treatment plant and the geotextile tube dewatering pad is underway.
- Additional sediment sampling took place in early July to assist in designing the cleanup. The information collected will further define the extent of contamination and allow for a more precise target for sediment removal.
- Onyx Hickory Meadows Landfill, Chilton, was selected to accept dewatered sediment. (See story on Page 3 .)



PHOTO COURTESY OF LITTLE LAKE PARTNERS WEB SITE

Crews install filter tanks in the water treatment plant.

Remaining three sections of the river and Green Bay

- An Appleton engineering firm was selected as the contractor who will oversee this portion of the cleanup for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It will be responsible for the sections of the Lower Fox River from Appleton to Green Bay and the bay itself, also referred to as Operable Units 2-5.
- Pre-design sediment sampling work was finished in July. This work will guide the cleanup design. It will also help EPA and DNR select options outlined in the 2002 record of decision document. These may include selecting areas that may be suitable for capping and will help find the exact areas to be dredged.
- The 2001 Lower Fox River community involvement plan is being revised by EPA and DNR. It will be available to the public at the

information repositories and on the agencies' Web sites this fall.

Natural Resource Damage Assessment

- Georgia-Pacific has submitted a project implementation plan for the NRDA projects it is funding in Brown County. Some of the projects have changed in scope and/or budget since they were initially proposed. For example, the city of DePere's extension of the East River Trail was completed with other funds while the Georgia-Pacific settlement was held up in court. The city is requesting that the \$90,000 set aside for the trail extension be used for another project. That project is the fairground boat launch and floating dock. The trustees are reviewing the implementation plan.
- Work on some NRDA projects is expected to begin this summer and may last until 2006.

Chilton Landfill Proves To Be Safe Choice for PCB Disposal

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Disposal of PCB-contaminated sediment from Little Lake Butte des Morts will begin this fall at the Onyx Hickory Meadows Landfill, town of Chilton.

Although Onyx is 20 miles from the actual cleanup site, it turned out to be a good choice for Glatfelter and WTM I Co., the two companies paying for this portion of the Lower Fox River cleanup.

According to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Remedial Project Manager Jim Hahnenberg, Onyx should work out well. "This location is relatively close to the site," he said. "It has unusually favorable geology with an exceptionally thick clay layer. It is 20 to 45 feet thick, which further reduces the minimal chance for leakage."

Onyx has been licensed by the state of Wisconsin since 1999. The 660-acre facility has the proper state permits to dispose of hazardous waste, including sediment containing PCBs up to 50 parts per million. It also has complied with all required engineering and monitoring safeguards. Since it opened, it has accepted PCB-contaminated waste from the Hayton Area remediation project in nearby Calumet County and the Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund site.

Hickory Meadows has more than seven million cubic yards of space in its plastic and clay-lined engineered landfill. "They have a lot of space to fill,"

Hahnenberg explained. "They could fill a regulation-size football field that is 3/4-mile high, if you can imagine what that would look like."

According to a federal agreement with EPA and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the companies are obligated to dispose of sediment dredged from Little Lake Butte des Morts in a landfill with permits to accept this type of waste. The agreement, called a consent decree, required that the lake cleanup be done according to the final plan

outlined in a December 2002 EPA document referred to as the record of decision. Another decision document dated July 2003 details the cleanup plan for other portions of the Lower Fox River and Green Bay.

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"The dredging that will occur this fall will be critical to the final design and the full scale work set to begin next spring," Hill stated.

The dock will be large enough for the boats and supplies needed to operate the dredge. For safety and security reasons, boaters will be required to stay away from the dock area as well as the dredge and pipeline in the lake. The floating section of the pipeline will be marked with large, round, orange buoys. Additional orange and white buoys will mark the general areas of the pipeline and the dredge. Green and red buoys will mark the channels for safely crossing the submerged portion of the pipeline. Boaters should cross the pipeline only between the red and green buoys. Boater safety information will be available at boat ramps, marinas, fishing clubs and bait shops. It will also be posted at www.littlelakecleanup.com.

Construction at the staging area is expected to be done by late August. Work in the lake will begin in early September. A public meeting or open house will be held in the Neenah/Menasha area to explain the work set for Little Lake Butte des Morts this fall. Regular information updates will be scheduled as work progresses.

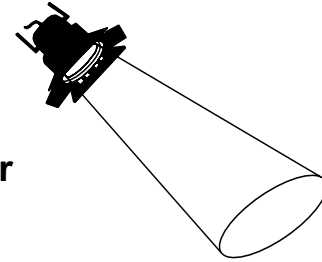
Hill added, "We want to do regular updates so we can address any concerns and answer any questions the neighbors may have about the project."

The Fox River Current is featuring promising natural resource damage assessment projects in and near the Lower Fox River.

Spotlight On:

Habitat Restoration Project Along the Upper Fox River

By Colette Charbonneau, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



The Fox River National Wildlife Refuge, managed through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, encompasses 1,004 acres of wetland and upland habitat (wildlife homes) along the Fox River in Marquette County, Wis. The refuge was established in 1978 to protect the area known as the Fox River Sandhill Crane Marsh from further drainage and to protect nesting and staging areas for the greater sandhill crane. Waterfowl and other migrant birds also use the area for nesting, feeding and as a rest area during migration.

Prior to federal ownership, 4.5 acres had been

artificially established as a red and white pine plantation on the area. This type of habitat is not native and limits use of the area by grassland birds, waterfowl and sandhill cranes. The Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resource Trustee Council approved \$150,000 for this FWS restoration project to remove the pine plantation and to reestablish native grassland for the birds. In winter 2003, four acres of the plantation were cut down (logged) to restore the upland habitat to pre-European settlement conditions which date back to the 1600s. The remaining half acre will be cut this winter. The land was logged in the winter while the ground was frozen so there would be minimal ground disturbance at a prehistoric



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHAWN PAPON, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

In winter 2003, four acres of a red and white pine plantation were cut down (logged) to restore the upland habitat to pre-European settlement conditions which date back to the 1600s.

site that was found during the archaeological survey done prior to the restoration.

Shawn Papon, FWS wildlife biologist at the refuge oversees the project. "By restoring this area into dry prairie, productive nesting and migratory habitat is now provided for greater sandhill cranes, many species of waterbirds and songbirds," he said.

The innovative biologist succeeded in securing matching funds from FWS grants and in-kind support from Ducks Unlimited to expand the amount of restoration natural resource damage assessment funds

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could support alone. He plans to restore habitat on the refuge beyond what was first proposed to the trustee council. Approximately 110 acres of dry prairie are being restored this year. This involves cedar tree removal, prescribed (controlled) burning, herbicide application and native grass and prairie plant seeding in abandoned agricultural fields. In addition, selective thinning in the winter and prescribed burning of the closed canopy oak forests will create about 90 acres of native open spaces with grasses and trees, referred to as savannas. Papon is also working on wetland restoration by plugging and filling ditches that were used to drain the area for farming.

Papon can often be found in the middle of a newly re-created prairie proudly gazing toward the Fox River looking through the recently logged forest. "Natural resource damage assessment settlement funds have assisted in the restoration of historical habitat conditions once found on the Fox River National Wildlife Refuge, namely dry prairie, oak savanna, sedge meadow and shallow marsh," he concluded.

The natural resource trustees are comprised of FWS, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Michigan Attorney General, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

For further information on NRDA projects, contact Trustee Council Coordinator Colette Charbonneau, FWS, at Colette_Charbonneau@fws.gov or at (920) 866-1726.



Restoring the area to a dry prairie will provide habitat for the greater sandhill crane.



Out and About...

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership is made up of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin and Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin. These partners, as well as other supporting agencies, regularly provide speakers to organizations in the Fox Valley area. The following people recently made presentations:

July

- ◆ *Greg Swanson and Kelly Mella*, DNR: University of Wisconsin environmental justice class field trip, Neenah; general Lower Fox River and Little Lake Butte des Morts cleanup.

New Phone Number for Oneida Rep

Environmental Specialist Tom Nelson, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, was recently given a new telephone number. He may now be reached at (920) 496-5350. Nelson, who works for the tribe's environmental health and safety department, is available to answer questions regarding natural resource damage assessment projects as well as on how the tribe is involved with its partner agencies on the Lower Fox River cleanup. His e-mail address is still: tnelson@oneidanation.org.

Profile On ... Phil Hoffman

EPA Congressional Liaison Works Behind the Scenes to Address Concerns

By Susan Pastor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

When Phil Hoffman retired in 1991 as senior vice president from a Chicago public relations firm after 33 years in the business, he quickly realized that he wasn't ready for retirement. "I was only 59 and that was too young to stay retired," he said.



Phil Hoffman

Determined not to "stay retired," the Kansas City, Mo. native used his networking skills and landed a job with EPA. "For eight years, one of my accounts was a hazardous waste incinerator in southeast Chicago," he explained. "I did public information and outreach in south Chicago to explain the incineration process. After it opened, I gave tours—many to EPA employees. I knew all about EPA from them."

Hoffman, 71, began his second career 12 years ago in EPA's Office of Public Affairs. As a public information specialist for the Great Lakes National Program Office, he handled media calls, wrote news releases and led tours of research vessels. After four years, he moved to the Office of the Regional Administrator to work with longtime Congressional

Liaison Mary Canavan. He still responds to calls for information, but from a different audience.

Hoffman, who has a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Missouri—Columbia and a bachelor's degree in foreign trade from the American Graduate School of International Management—Phoenix, Ariz., speaks to citizens about the Lower Fox River through their congressional representatives. "They don't have environmental experts on their staffs," he continued. "It's our job to know who to go to at EPA for answers. That's why they call us."

After each call, letter or e-mail is answered, Hoffman keeps track of them. "We input them into a congressional file, review the responses and if there's a problem, we send them back (to those who wrote the responses) for revisions."

When local congressional offices aren't contacting Hoffman, their Washington, D.C. counterparts are. Hoffman often works with them on communication strategies. He also works directly with Chicago's regional administrator to arrange meetings with EPA management and staff as well as with members of Congress.

While Hoffman receives written and telephone inquiries on environmental issues from all six states that EPA's Chicago office covers, he notes those from the federal elected officials representing the Fox Valley. Staff members from the offices of Rep. Tom Petri, Sen. Herb Kohl, Sen. Russ Feingold and Rep. Mark Green communicate when necessary with Hoffman.

"Fox inquiries have slacked off in the past year or so because our Office of Public Affairs keeps everyone well informed," he stated. "Also, before any major event, we have a briefing for the congressional delegation so there are no surprises. We let the elected officials know what's happening ahead of time

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so they will pass that information onto their constituents.”

To give correct information about the Lower Fox River cleanup, Hoffman is constantly learning. He studies the Green Bay area, the people who live there, the historical aspects and the scientific technologies. “I’ve learned about the different ethnic populations living along the Fox, the communities involved and their degrees of interest.”

Before working on EPA’s Lower Fox River team, Hoffman admits he knew very little about Wisconsin. “To me, Wisconsin was Milwaukee, Green Bay and maybe nearby Racine,” he confessed.

Although an avid traveler in his spare time, the only real time he has spent in the state, other than on work-related trips, was on his honeymoon after marrying his wife, Eileen, in St. Louis 50 years ago. “We went to Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Dells,” he said. “We wanted to go to a lakeside community. We wanted to be near the water.”

Today, they live near the water in a Chicago condominium not far from Lake Michigan. Although many of his coworkers dream of the day when they

can retire, Hoffman has no intention of calling it quits anytime soon. When he isn’t working, he is planning his next exotic vacation. To support his travel habit, he has been a freelance travel writer since 1987, targeting readers more than 50 years of age. He also realizes that to keep up this pace, he needs to stay in shape.

“For 22 years, I’ve been doing a 12-mile walk along the lakeshore with friends,” he revealed. “I also go to two exercise classes a week. Diet and exercise—and some good genes—are my secrets to good health.”

**Check out these Web sites:**

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/lowerfox/>

<http://www.epa.gov/region5/sites/foxriver/>

<http://www.fws.gov/r9dec/nrdar/nrdamain.html>

<http://www.fws.gov/r3pao/nrda/>

New!

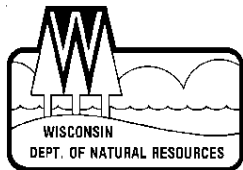
Information Available at Local Libraries

The Intergovernmental Partners invite the public to review technical reports, fact sheets and other documents related to the Lower Fox River cleanup at information repositories set up in the reference sections of the following local libraries. Information repositories at the public libraries in DePere, Kaukauna, Little Chute, Neenah and Wrightstown have been discontinued. However, binders containing fact sheets are being maintained at these locations as well as at the repositories listed below.

- **Appleton Public Library**, 225 N. Oneida St., Appleton, Wis.; (920) 832-6170
- **Brown County Library**, 515 Pine St., Green Bay, Wis.; (920) 448-4381, Ext. 394
- **Door County Library**, 107 S. Fourth Ave., Sturgeon Bay, Wis.; (920) 743-6578
- **Oneida Community Library**, 201 Elm St., Oneida, Wis.; (920) 869-2210
- **Oshkosh Public Library**, 106 Washington Ave., Oshkosh, Wis.; (920) 236-5200



An administrative record, which contains detailed information upon which the selection of the final site cleanup plan was based, is also available for review at two DNR offices: 801 E. Walnut St., Green Bay, Wis. and 101 S. Webster St., 2nd Floor, Madison, Wis. An administrative record is also available at the EPA Record Center, 77 W. Jackson Blvd., 7th Floor, Chicago, Ill.



Prepared by the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Supporting agencies include Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in these articles are solely those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by all members of the Fox River Intergovernmental Partnership.

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